

# ENGLISH 110: FILM STUDIES

Winter 2015 – Wednesdays 2:00-4:50 PM – NSH 109 – CRN 32518

<b>Instructor:</b> Matt Usner <b>Office:</b> NSH-213	<b>Email:</b> usnrm@linnbenton.edu <b>Office Phone:</b> 917-4283	<b>Office Hours:</b> Tue/Thur 11:30-12:00 and Wed 11:45-1:45
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**The Purpose of This Syllabus:** This syllabus contains all the vital information about this course—what you’ll be learning, what will be expected of you, and what you can expect from me. Essentially, this syllabus is a contract that states what is required of both of us during the term. Since this is a valuable document, you should study it and refer to it often. **The better you know the syllabus, the better the chance that you’ll do well in the course.**

**Course Catalog Description:** “Explores the power of film to shape and reflect culture and ideology; raises questions about film and its relationship to self, others, and social values; studies film genres and styles, aesthetics, film history, film as a collaborative medium, Hollywood, independent and international cinema, techniques and grammar of film, and major film theories. 3 class hours/week, 3 credits.”

**Prerequisite:** A grade of “C” or better in Writing 121 is **strongly recommended** for success in this class.

**Course Overview:** This course will introduce you to the study of film. We will watch a variety of film excerpts, as well as some full-length features, and we’ll examine not only their narrative and technical elements, but also the thematic statements that they make about the “real” world. Many of the films we will view are noticeably different than typical Hollywood blockbusters that are in theaters today. It will be important, then, to challenge yourself to not simply view these films as forgettable entertainment, but as complex artistic creations that require close study. Likewise, because we’ll be watching film selections from different historical periods and from countries other than the U.S., it will be important to keep an open mind, realizing that even if a particular selection doesn't appeal to you, this class will still require you to study it closely and think critically about it. Because this is a discussion-based course, your active participation will be expected. The best way to be an active participant in class is to thoroughly read the textbook selections and come to class prepared to share your thoughts. Our classroom will be a safe, open space to exchange ideas respectfully. Remember, minds work best when they’re open. Film is a lively art, and we’re obligated to treat it with lively attitudes in class. I promise to make this class as engaging as I can, but if you aren't interested in watching films, particularly ones outside of the mainstream—and thinking critically while doing so—then this course may not be for you.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** Students who complete this course will be able to:

- Analyze the major compositional elements of film, including mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing, and sound.
- Analyze the major elements of narrative film, including plot, character, setting, and theme.
- Analyze the major conventions used in select film genres.
- Apply key vocabulary terms used in film studies.
- Interpret and evaluate films based on their genre, compositional, and narrative elements.

**Required Textbook:** Barsam, Richard and Dave Monahan. *Looking at Movies*. 4th ed. Norton. The textbook is available at the LBCC bookstore in the Calapooia Center. A copy is also on library reserve. All required reading assignments are listed on the course calendar.

**Moodle:** Important course materials—such as class announcements, assignments, handouts, and grades—will be posted on our course site on Moodle (<http://elearning.linnbenton.edu/>), which is the college's online course management system. **You will need to access it regularly to do well in this course, so please plan accordingly.** If you need help getting started with Moodle, let me know during the first week of class, and I'll be glad to work with you.

**No-Show Policy:** If you miss the first class session and do not contact me before the first Friday of the term to explain your absence, you will be dropped from the course.

**Attendance Policy:** Your attendance is essential to your chances at doing well in this course, especially given that we meet only once a week. Missing class means missing valuable instruction time, which means that you give yourself the best chance to do well by attending every class. **An absence is never an excuse for missing an assignment's due date, as all due dates are already listed on the course calendar.**

**Assignments & Activities:**

- ***Final Exam (30% of final grade):*** The final exam will be held on the **Monday of Finals Week from 3:00 to 4:50** (room to be announced), and it will test you on vocabulary terms from the textbook readings and require you to answer one essay question.
- ***Scene Analysis Essay (20% of final grade):*** This essay (4-5 typed pages) will ask you to analyze the cinematic elements of a short scene from one of the films we watch in class. Specific instructions and grading criteria for this essay will be posted on Moodle well before its due date. You will have the option of revising this paper for the chance at a higher grade, as long as the original paper is submitted on time.

- **Response Papers (20% of final grade):** Response papers will ask you to make connections between textbook concepts and the film selections we watch in class. **4 response papers will be assigned, with the last two being worth more points than the first two.** Response papers will be submitted on Moodle, so no printed hard copies will be required. Specific instructions for each response paper will be posted on Moodle.
- **Online Reading Quizzes (16% of final grade):** 8 online reading quizzes will be posted on Moodle and will consist of 10 multiple choice questions from each of the 8 chapters we read of the textbook. Quizzes will be open-book, and you will have one week to complete each one. You will have the option of taking each quiz **twice**, but be aware that if you take a quiz a second time, you may be presented with some different questions than you saw in your first attempt. If you take a quiz twice, only your highest score will be recorded.
- **Reading Checks (10% of final grade):** Reading checks are short quizzes, in which you answer one or two questions about the required reading or film viewing for a given class period. For example, you may be asked to define a key vocabulary term or two, or summarize a fundamental concept. **There will be 12 reading checks, but only your 10 highest scores out of 12 will count toward your final grade.** Reading checks will not be announced in advance. They may be given at any time during the class period, and more than one reading check may be given in the same period. If you are not present in class for a reading check, you cannot make it up. Your best way to prepare for reading checks is to read the textbook selections thoroughly, identify key terms and concepts, and be able to answer the “Questions for Review” that are listed at the end of each chapter in the book.
- **Syllabus Quiz (2% of final grade):** During the first week of the term, you will be taking a short online quiz on Moodle that covers information on this syllabus.
- **Letter of Introduction (2% of final grade):** Your first writing assignment will be a short emailed letter in which you introduce yourself.

**Grading:** You can earn up to **500 points** in this course:

ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS	TOTAL POINTS	% OF FINAL GRADE
Final Exam	150	150	30%
Scene Analysis Essay (can be revised once)	100	100	20%
4 Response Papers	20, 20, 30, 30	100	20%
8 Online Reading Quizzes	10 each	80	16%
10 Reading Checks (out of 12)	5 each	50	10%
Syllabus Quiz	10	10	2%

Letter of Introduction	10	10	2%
<b>TOTAL →</b>	---	<b>500</b>	<b>100%</b>

Your final grade will be determined by the following point breakdown:

GRADE	TOTAL POINTS	DESCRIPTION
<b>A</b>	500 to 448 points (89.6% and up)	Passing work that is <u>excellent</u>
<b>B</b>	447 to 398 points (89.4% to 79.6%)	Passing work that is <u>good</u>
<b>C</b>	397 to 348 points (79.4% to 69.6%)	Passing work that is <u>average</u>
<b>D</b>	347 to 298 points (69.4% to 59.6%)	Non-passing work that is <u>below average</u>
<b>F</b>	297 and below (59.4% and below)	Non-passing work that is <u>fundamentally lacking</u>

**Policy on Late Work:** All assignment due dates appear on the course calendar. In fairness to all students, an assignment that is submitted after its deadline will lose points and may not receive feedback. Specific policies for late penalties will be included with assignment instructions, so please read them carefully.

**Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:** Presenting someone else's ideas in writing as if they are your own is plagiarism, and it is a serious academic offense. **Any plagiarized elements in your writing will result in, at minimum, a zero for the assignment and, at maximum, automatic course failure.** If you ever borrow information from an outside source to put in an essay, you must cite it properly. If you're not sure how to do this, please ask me for help before submitting your paper. Once you submit a plagiarized paper, the consequences mentioned above will be enforced. Be aware that plagiarism-detection software is automatically used for the writing assignments that you submit on Moodle.

**Office Hours:** I encourage you to visit me during my office hours to discuss any questions or concerns you have. It's best to schedule a time in advance, but I won't mind if you stop by unannounced.

**Useful Campus Resources and Policies:**

- **LBCC Student Email:** Please make sure that you check your student email regularly throughout the term. Should I need to contact you, I will be emailing your student account. You can find information about accessing your LBCC email here: <http://www.linnbenton.edu/roadrunner-mail>

- **The LBCC Writing Center:** The [LBCC Writing Center](http://www.linnbenton.edu/learning-center/writing-center) (WH-200) is a fantastic free resource for students. Tutors are available to assist you with all aspects of your writing assignments. The Writing Center also offers online tutoring services as well. Get more information here: <http://www.linnbenton.edu/learning-center/writing-center>
- **The LBCC Library:** The [LBCC library](http://library.linnbenton.edu/home) is located on the first floor of Willamette Hall. The library has several [databases for research articles](http://library.linnbenton.edu/home) that you can access both on and off-campus. Get more information here: <http://library.linnbenton.edu/home>
- **Center for Accessibility Resources:** Please speak to me during the first week of class if:
  - you have a documented disability and need accommodations,
  - your instructor needs to know medical information about you, or
  - you need special arrangements in the event of an emergency.If you think you may need accommodation services, please, contact the Center for Accessibility Resources at (541) 917-4789.
- **Non-Discrimination Policy:** LBCC prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, ethnicity, gender, native language, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, veteran status, or any other status protected under law. Everyone in the LBCC community has the right to think, learn, and work together in an environment of respect, tolerance, and goodwill.

**Our Classroom's "Golden Rules":** In the classroom, we want to maximize our learning and minimize distractions from it. With that idea in mind, please honor the following common courtesies:

- Arrive to class on time and stay the entire period. Remember, points will be deducted from your final grade for late arrivals, early exits, and missed classes.
- Stay in the classroom for the entire period. Entering and exiting the classroom while class is in session disrupts the learning environment.
- Silence your phone and put it away—not in your lap or under a book.
- Feel free to bring a drink to class, but please don't bring food in the classroom,.
- Give your full attention to whomever is addressing the class.

***(COURSE CALENDAR ON NEXT PAGE!)***



DATE	TOPICS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND DUE DATES	WHAT TO DO BEFORE CLASS
<b>WEEK 1</b> Wed 1/7	Course introduction; <b>Assign Syllabus Quiz, Letter of Introduction, and Online Reading Quiz #1 (all due 1/14)</b>	None
<b>WEEK 2</b> Wed 1/14	Discuss film studies and film analysis; <b>Begin Reading Checks; Assign Online Reading Quiz #2 (due 1/21); Assign Response Paper #1 (due 1/21)</b> ; Film excerpt: <i>American Splendor</i>	Read <i>Looking at Movies</i> chapter 1 ("Looking at Movies"); Watch chapter 1 video tutorials
<b>WEEK 3</b> Wed 1/21	Discuss mise-en-scène; <b>Assign Online Reading Quiz #3 (due 1/28)</b> ; Various film excerpts	Read <i>Looking at Movies</i> chapter 5 ("Mise-en-Scène"); Watch chapter 5 video tutorials
<b>WEEK 4</b> Wed 1/28	Discuss cinematography; <b>Assign Online Reading Quiz #4 (due 2/4); Assign Response Paper #2 (due 2/4)</b> ; Film excerpt: <i>Only Lovers Left Alive</i>	Read <i>Looking at Movies</i> chapter 6 ("Cinematography"); Watch chapter 6 video tutorials
<b>WEEK 5</b> Wed 2/4	Discuss editing; Start watching <i>Rushmore</i> ; <b>Assign Online Reading Quiz #5 (due 2/11); Assign Scene Analysis Essay (due 2/18)</b>	Read <i>Looking at Movies</i> chapter 8 ("Editing"); Watch chapter 8 video tutorials
<b>WEEK 6</b> Wed 2/11	Discuss sound; Finish watching <i>Rushmore</i> ; Review guidelines for scene analysis essay	Read <i>Looking at Movies</i> chapter 9 ("Sound"); Watch chapter 9 video tutorial
<b>WEEK 7</b> Wed 2/18	Discuss film genres; Extra-credit opportunity: share and discuss a favorite film scene with the class; Open online poll for film choice on 3/4; <b>Assign Online Reading Quiz #6 (due 2/25)</b>	None
<b>WEEK 8</b> Wed 2/25	Continue discussing film genres; <b>Assign Online Reading Quiz #7 (due 3/4); Assign Response Paper #3 (due 3/4)</b>	Read <i>Looking at Movies</i> chapter 3 ("Types of Movies"); Watch chapter 3 video tutorials
<b>WEEK 9</b> Wed 3/4	Discuss narrative films; Film selection determined by class vote; <b>Assign Online Reading Quiz #8 (due 3/11); Assign Response Paper #4 (due 3/11)</b>	Read <i>Looking at Movies</i> chapter 4 ("Elements of Narrative"); Watch chapter 4 video tutorials
<b>WEEK 10</b> Wed 3/11	Discuss film history; Vocab review; Review Final Exam instructions	Read <i>Looking at Movies</i> chapter 10 ("Film History")
<b>WEEK 11</b> <b>MON</b> 3/16	<b>Final Exam period: 3:00-4:50; Optional revision of Scene Analysis due</b>	None